

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A feeding device for feeding a recording medium in a feed direction, comprising:

a drive roller having an annular recess formed in an outer circumferential surface thereof and

a driven roller rotatably held and positioned relative to said drive roller such that a radially outer end portion of said driven roller is positioned within said annular recess of said drive roller so that said radially outer end portion of said driven roller overlaps with a radially outer end portion of said drive roller;

wherein said driven roller is displaceable at least in a direction away from said drive roller, so that the recording medium is fed to pass between said drive roller and said driven roller, with the recording medium being gripped by said radially outer end portion of said driven roller and said radially outer end portion of said drive roller,

said feeding device further comprising:

an overlap-amount limiter including a contact portion which is positioned within said annular recess and which is, during absence of the recording medium between said drive roller and said driven roller, held in contact at a surface thereof with said radially outer end portion of said driven roller, for thereby limiting an overlap amount by which said radially outer end portion of said driven roller overlaps with said radially outer end portion of said drive roller.

2. The feeding device according to claim 1, further comprising a biaser which biases said driven roller toward said drive roller.

3. The feeding device according to claim 2, wherein said biaser includes a flexible shaft holding said driven roller mounted thereon, such that said driven roller is rotatable relative to said flexible shaft.

4. The feeding device according to claim 1, wherein said drive roller is disposed on a downstream side, as viewed in said feed direction, of a recording portion which records an image on the recording medium.

5. The feeding device according to claim 1, wherein said contact portion of said overlap-amount limiter is formed of a material which is harder than a material forming said driven roller.

6. The feeding device according to claim 1, wherein said surface of said contact portion of said overlap-amount limiter is positioned between said outer circumferential surface of said drive roller and a bottom surface of said annular recess of drive roller.

7. The feeding device according to claim 1, wherein said driven roller is formed of a resin.

8. The feeding device according to claim 1, wherein said overlap amount limiter includes an annular member which is accommodated in said annular recess.

9. The feeding device according to claim 8, wherein said annular member is formed of an elastic material and has a cut portion so as to be diametrically expandable.

10. A feeding device for feeding a recording medium in a feed direction, comprising:

a drive roller having a plurality of annular recesses formed in an outer circumferential surface thereof

a plurality of driven rollers positioned relative to said drive roller such that a radially outer end portion of each of said driven rollers is positioned within a corresponding one of said annular recesses of said drive roller so that said radially outer end portion of each of said driven rollers overlaps with a radially outer end portion of said drive roller; and

a plurality of flexible shafts each holding a corresponding one of said driven rollers mounted on an axially intermediate portion thereof, such that the corresponding one of said driven rollers is rotatable relative to each of said flexible shafts,

wherein each of said driven rollers is displaceable at least in a direction away from said drive roller, so that the recording medium is fed to pass between said drive roller and

said driven rollers, with the recording medium being gripped by said radially outer end portion of each of said driven rollers and said radially outer end portion of said drive roller,

said feeding device further comprising:

a plurality of overlap amount limiters each including a contact portion which is positioned within a corresponding one of said annular recesses and which is, during absence of the recording medium between said drive roller and said driven rollers, held in contact at a surface thereof with said radially outer end portion of a corresponding one of said driven rollers, for thereby limiting an overlap amount by which said radially outer end portion of each of said driven rollers overlaps with said radially outer end portion of said drive roller.

11. A feeding device according to claim 10, further comprising a displacement limiter which limits displacement of axially opposite end portions of each of said flexible shafts in the direction away from said drive roller.

12. An image recording apparatus comprising:  
the feeding device defined in claim 1;

a recording portion which records an image on a recording medium and which is disposed on an upstream side of said feeding device as viewed in said feed direction;

a platen which is opposed to said recording portion and supports the recording medium; and

a media exit portion through which the recording

medium exits from said apparatus after the image is recorded on the recording medium by said recording portion.

13. The image recording apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said overlap-amount limiter includes a tongue member which extends in said feed direction and which has a proximal end portion positioned on an upstream side of said driven roller as viewed in said feed direction.

14. The image recording apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said tongue member extends from said platen.

15. The image recording apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said tongue member is formed integrally with said platen.

16. The image recording apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said overlap-amount limiter includes a tongue member which extends in a direction opposite to said feed direction and which has a proximal end portion positioned on a downstream side of said driven roller as viewed in said feed direction.

17. The image recording apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said tongue member extends from a member which constitutes at least a part of said media exit portion.

18. The image recording apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said tongue member is formed integrally with said member which constitutes at least the part of said media exit portion.

19. The image recording apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said member which constitutes at least the part of said media exit portion is provided by a media exit tray which supports the recording medium after the image is recorded on the recording medium by said recording portion.